

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes

**Meeting of Friday 24 June 2011
Board Room, Drummond Gate, London**

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Sir Michael Scholar (Chair)

Lord Rowe-Beddoe (Deputy Chair, ONS)

Professor Sir Roger Jowell (Deputy Chair, Official Statistics)

Mr Richard Alldritt

Dr Colette Bowe

Mr Partha Dasgupta

Ms Moira Gibb

Ms Jil Matheson

Mr Stephen Penneck (to item 12)

Professor David Rhind

Sir Jon Shortridge

Secretariat

Mr Robert Bumpstead

Mr Mervyn Stevens

Other Attendees

Mr John Finch (Office for National Statistics) for item 7

Mr Richard Laux (Monitoring and Assessment) for items 9 to 14

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1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes, matters arising from the previous meeting and other matters

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 May were accepted as a true and fair account.

3.2 The Chair informed the meeting that it had been announced that Professor Dame Janet Finch was the government's nominated candidate to succeed him as Chair of the UK Statistics Authority. This appointment would be subject to a pre-appointment hearing of the Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) on 28 June, and then an approval motion and vote of the House of Commons on 11 July.

3.3 The Chair reported that he had reappointed Mr Alex Jablonowski to the Authority's Audit Committee for a second three-year term to 30 June 2014.

3.4 The Chair informed the meeting that he had written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rt. Hon. George Osborne MP on 26 May regarding the breach by HM Treasury on 16 May of the pre-release access restrictions for the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) for April, which had been published on 17 May. This letter had been published on the Authority's website. A reply from Mr Osborne was awaited.

3.5 The Chair also reported that he and the National Statistician had attended a meeting chaired by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, Rt. Hon. Francis Maude MP to discuss statistics beyond the 2011 Census.

4. Reports from Authority Committee Chairs

Audit Committee

4.1 Professor Rhind reported on the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 24 May. The meeting had received reports from Internal Audit and an update from the National Audit Office (NAO) on progress with the external audit for 2010/11. The Committee had also reviewed its terms of reference and approved its Annual Report for 2010/11.

4.2 The Authority noted the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2010/11 and the opinion of the Chair of the Audit Committee on the governance arrangements and control framework in operation during 2010/11, and that this opinion would be reflected in the Accounting Officer's Statement on Internal Control which would be published with the Authority's Accounts for 2010/11.

Assessment Committee

4.3 Professor Jowell reported on the meeting of the Assessment Committee held on 3 June. It had been suggested that there should be a further annex to Assessment Reports which would detail compliance against the Authority's statement on standards for statistical releases. It was agreed that detailed proposals should be presented to the next meeting of the Committee on 1 July.

4.4 The Committee also discussed the need for information on producer actions in respect of Suggestions made in Assessment Reports. While there was a formal record of the implementation of Requirements, the implementation of Suggestions was not monitored systematically. The meeting had agreed that a Monitoring Brief should be

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prepared to address this issue.

- 4.5 The meeting had considered 10 draft Assessment Reports and had recommended that four of these should be further considered by the Authority Board. These would be discussed later in the meeting.

Committee for Official Statistics

- 4.6 Professor Jowell reported on the meeting of the Committee for Official Statistics held on 3 June. The meeting had received a progress report from the National Statistician on her review of crime statistics and had considered the recommendations that would be made to the Home Secretary.
- 4.7 The Committee had considered an update on proposed reductions in statistical outputs by government departments and on the Authority's response to these proposals. The meeting had also considered a paper from the Government Statistical Service (GSS) on the implications for official statistics and the GSS arising from the government's transparency agenda.
- 4.8 The Committee had endorsed proposals for two Monitoring reviews on: the outcomes of Suggestions in Assessment Reports; and a system-wide overview of the effect of reductions in statistical expenditure. The meeting had received a progress report on the Authority's review of statistical releases and publications and it was anticipated that a Monitoring Brief would be published by the end of the year. A draft of a Monitoring Brief on immigration statistics had been considered and a revised draft of this Brief would be considered by the Authority later in the meeting.

Office for National Statistics Board (ONS)

- 4.9 Lord Rowe-Beddoe reported on the meeting of the ONS Board held on 10 June. The meeting had considered a report from the Director General of ONS and had reviewed risks and progress with major programmes and projects. The meeting had discussed property issues and had received an update on progress with delivery of the new ONS website.
- 4.10 The ONS Board had reviewed its membership and terms of reference. It had been agreed that two Executive Directors of ONS should join the ONS Board over the next few months and that, with the exception of the Director General and the Finance Director, the appointments of ONS Executive Directors to the ONS Board should in future be for fixed terms.
- 4.11 The Authority noted these developments and approved the revised terms of reference for the ONS Board.

Remuneration Committee

- 4.12 Lord Rowe-Beddoe reported on the meeting of the Remuneration Committee held on 10 June. The Committee had reviewed the outcomes of the pay moderating meetings for Directors and Deputy Directors and had approved the payment of proposed bonuses, which were within the limits set by the Cabinet Office. The Committee had also agreed the performance markings for the Director General of ONS and the Authority's Head of Assessment.

5. Census 2011

- 5.1 Ms Matheson reported on progress with the Census. ONS was now working on ensuring compliance with the statutory requirement to complete the census form. In

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response to suggestions made on the internet earlier that week that hackers had accessed census data, ONS had initiated a full investigation but no evidence of such a breach had been found, nor of any unauthorised attempt to access data.

5.2 The meeting noted these developments.

6. National Statistician's Review of Crime Statistics

6.1 Ms Matheson reported on progress with her review of crime statistics. The final report had been sent to the Home Secretary for consideration by Home Office ministers and had been published on 6 June.

6.2 The meeting noted progress.

7. UK Statistics Authority Annual Report and Accounts 2010/11 [SA(11)39]

7.1 Mr Bumpstead introduced a draft of the Authority's Annual Report and Accounts for 2010/11. The Audit Committee would be meeting later that day to consider a draft of the Authority's Accounts for 2010/11 and to receive the audit completion report from the NAO. The Annual Report and Accounts would be laid before Parliament in July, before the parliamentary summer recess.

7.2 The meeting reviewed the draft and approved it for publication, subject to amendments and the endorsement of the Audit Committee in respect of the financial statements.

8. UK Statistics Authority and ONS Business Plans [SA(11)40]

8.1 Mr Bumpstead presented drafts of business plans for the four years of the current Spending Review settlement to March 2015 for the Office for National Statistics, the National Statistician's Office and the Authority. The ONS Board had approved the draft of the ONS business plan at meetings earlier in the year. The plans for the National Statistician's Office and the Authority set out priorities for the next four years.

8.2 The Authority approved these plans for publication, subject to agreed amendments to the ONS plan.

9. Statistical Expenditure Report 4: Statistics on smoking, drinking and health [SA(11)41]

9.1 Mr Laux introduced a draft of Statistical Expenditure Report (SER) 4: Statistics on smoking, drinking and health. The Authority Chair had written to the Secretary of State for Health, Rt. Hon. Andrew Lansley MP on 21 March urging him to reject proposals from the NHS Information Centre (NHS IC) to cease its contribution of £300,000 to the costs of the ONS General Lifestyle Survey (GLF) with immediate effect. A reply from Mr Lansley was awaited. The draft SER looked at the NHS IC proposals and had concluded that the withdrawal of funding for health-related questions in the GLF should be reconsidered, taking into account the full implications for users of these statistics.

9.2 Following discussion, it was agreed that the SER should be published, subject to agreed amendments, and that the Chair should write to Mr Lansley again and send him a copy of the published report.

10. Plans for Monitoring Briefs [SA(11)42]

10.1 Mr Laux presented an update on plans for Monitoring Briefs. The draft Monitoring Brief on climate change statistics was being considered by meteorological and other science community professionals and a further draft would be submitted to the next meeting of the Authority for approval. Drafts of Monitoring Briefs on immigration statistics and a UK-wide deprivation index would be considered later in the meeting. Work on several other Monitoring reviews was ongoing.

10.2 The meeting noted progress.

11. Draft Monitoring Brief 5/11: Immigration Statistics [SA(11)43]

11.1 Mr Laux introduced a draft Monitoring Brief which set out the perspective of the Authority in respect of UK immigration statistics, including proposals for the improvement in the presentation of these statistics. The work was being done at the request of the Home Affairs Select Committee.

11.2 The meeting approved the Monitoring Brief for publication, subject to agreed amendments, and agreed that this should be sent to the Home Affairs Select Committee.

12. Draft Monitoring Brief: 6/11: A UK Index of Multiple Deprivation [SA(11)44]

12.1 Mr Laux presented a draft Monitoring Brief which set out the Authority's perspective on the demand for, and feasibility of, a UK-wide Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The Brief considered the demand for, and potential difficulties of producing a UK IMD. It was agreed that this issue could usefully be further discussed with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

12.2 It was agreed that, following that discussion with the ESRC, a revised draft should be produced and published.

13. Assessments Reports for Approval [SA(11)45]

13.1 The Head of Assessment, Mr Alldritt reported that he and the Assessment Committee had recommended that the following six Assessment Reports be published:

- i. Statistics on Demography and Vital Events in Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency);
- ii. Statistics on Sexual Health in Scotland (Information Services Division of NHS National Services Scotland);
- iii. Statistics on Homicide, Domestic Abuse, Firearm Offences and Firearm Certificates Recorded by the Police in Scotland (Scottish Government);
- iv. Statistics on Housing in England (Department for Communities and Local Government);
- v. Statistics on Contraceptive Services (NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care); and
- vi. Statistics on Food (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs).

13.2 The meeting approved these Assessment Reports for publication.

13.3 Mr Alldritt reported that the Monitoring and Assessment team would review the list of 22 draft Assessment Reports scheduled for consideration at the September meeting of the Assessment Committee, and limit this to the agreed maximum of 10.

14. Draft Assessment Reports 115, 116, 118 and 120 [SA(11)46, 47, 48 and 49]

14.1 The meeting noted that the following draft Assessment Reports had been considered at the meeting of the Assessment Committee on 3 June, when it had been agreed that these reports should be considered further by the Authority Board:

- i. AR 115: Special assessment of the 2011 Censuses in the UK: Phase 2 [SA(11)46];
- ii. AR 116: Statistics on Adult Dental Health [SA(11)47];
- iii. AR 118: Environmental Accounts [SA(11)48]; and
- iv. AR 120: Statistics on Tax Receipts [SA(11)49].

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14.2 Following discussion, it was agreed that these Assessment Reports should be published subject to agreed amendments. The Authority was pleased to note that Assessment Report 116: Statistics on Adult Dental Health was the first Assessment Report to contain no Requirements and that approval could be given to immediate designation as a National Statistic.

15. Any other business

There was no other business.

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Agenda

Friday, 24 June, 2011

Board Room, Drummond Gate, London, 11:15 - 12:45

Chair: Sir Michael Scholar

Apologies:

1	Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting Declarations of interest	Meeting of 200511
2	Reports from Authority Committee Chairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Audit Committee● Assessment Committee● Committee for Official Statistics● ONS Board● Remuneration Committee	Oral Reports Professor David Rhind Professor Sir Roger Jowell Professor Sir Roger Jowell Lord Rowe-Beddoe Lord Rowe-Beddoe
3	Census 2011	Oral Report Ms Jil Matheson
4	National Statistician's Review of Crime Statistics	Oral Report Ms Jil Matheson
5	UK Statistics Authority Annual Report and Accounts 2010/11	SA(11)39 Secretariat
6	UK Statistics Authority and ONS Business Plan	SA(11)40 <i>Late Paper</i> Secretariat
7	Statistical Expenditure Report 4: Statistics on smoking, drinking and health	SA(11)41 Mr Richard Laux
8	Plans for Monitoring Briefs (MB) i. MB 5/11: Immigration Statistics ii. MB 6/11: A UK Index of Multiple Deprivation	SA(11)42 Mr Richard Laux SA(11)43 SA(11)44 Mr Richard Laux

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9	<p>Assessment Reports (AR) for Approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. AR 115: Special assessment of the 2011 Censuses in the UK: Phase 2 ii. AR 116: Statistics on Adult Dental Health iii. AR 118: Environmental Accounts iv. AR 120: Statistics on Tax Receipts 	<p>SA(11)45 Mr Richard Alldritt</p> <p>SA(11)46</p> <p>SA(11)47</p> <p>SA(11)48</p> <p>SA(11)49</p>
10	Any other business	

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(11)39

UK Statistics Authority Annual Report and Accounts 2010/11

These documents have been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see these documents go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/what-we-do/corporate-information/annual-report-and-resource-accounts/index.html>

1K STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(11)40

UK Statistics Authority and ONS Business Plans

These documents will be published on the UK Statistics Authority and Office for National Statistics websites in due course.

The documents will be available at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/default.asp>

SA(11)41 – Statistical Expenditure Report 4: Statistics on smoking, drinking and health

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(11)41

Statistical Expenditure Report 4: Statistics on smoking, drinking and health

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see this document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/statistical-expenditure-reports/index.html>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(11)42

Plans for Monitoring Briefs

These documents have been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see these documents go to:

Monitoring Brief 5-2011: Immigration Statistics

SA(11)43

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-briefs/index.html>

Monitoring Brief 6-2011: UK Index of Multiple Deprivation

SA(11)44

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-briefs/monitoring-brief-6-2011---indices-of-multiple-depravation.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(11)45

Assessment Reports for Approval

These documents have been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see these documents go to:

Assessment Report 112: Special Assessment of the 2011 Census in the UK:
Phase 2

SA(11)46

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-115---census-phase-ii.pdf>

Assessment Report 116: Statistics on Adult Dental Health

SA(11)47

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-116---statistics-on-adult-dental-health.pdf>

Assessment Report 118: Environmental Accounts

SA(11)48

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-118---environmental-accounts.pdf>

Assessment Report 120: Statistics on Tax Receipts

SA(11)49

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-120---statistics-on-tax-receipts.pdf>